

RUSSIA

exalted enthusiasm and a high devotion that resembles that which animates the member of the Salvation Army. This enthusiasm, and the belief in Russia, the hopefulness about Russia, which they sensed, every where, struck the Webbs prodigiously they felt, as a sort of throb in the air.⁵³ A hundred and fifty millions of people, emancipated and eager "

Economically, they believe that the Russians have got hold of the right end of the stick⁵³ they will succeed, because

"they have taken the whole business of production and distribution out of the hands of the producers, whether Capitalist or Trade Unionist, and put it into the hands of the representatives of the consumers "

If this is the position to-day, the fact that it is so, as he put it in one of his lectures, illustrates "the inevitability of gradualness " The swing in Russian policy has, indeed been remarkable They began by saying "All power to the producers " Then, they abolished the Trade Unions, and sought to suppress the Go-operatives To-day, the Trade Unions are regarded as indispensable, the Co-operatives are the fulcrum of the whole State economy, and the consumers, very properly, as the Webbs have always said, call the tune for the producers To this position, the Bolsheviks have been brought by the logic of events and of facts It is the position, of course, which Mrs Webb outlined in her little book on *The Co-operative Movement* (1891), and they expanded, later, in their big book on the theory of *Consumers Co-operation* (1922) Like the result or dislike it

—and they,
more or less feeling themselves in the position
of parents,
rather like it—it is the underlying reason
which supports
their judgment that

"There is less chance of the Russian
Government being over-
thrown than of any other Government in
the world being over-
thrown "